

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic Shanley Building

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 7800 Maryland Ave.

not for publication

city, town Clayton

vicinity of

congressional district #1 Hon. Wm. Clay

state Missouri

code 29

county St. Louis

code 189

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Leo S. Shanley

street & number 7800 Maryland Ave.

city, town Clayton

vicinity of

state Missouri 63105

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Louis County Recorder of Deeds

street & number 7900 Forsyth

city, town Clayton

state Missouri 63105

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title 1. Historic Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date July, 1980 metropolitan ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records East-West Gateway Coordinating Council

city, town 112 N. Fourth St., St. Louis

state Missouri 63102

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2. The Building Art in St. Louis: Two Centuries
published: 1967 (p. 68); 1981 (p. 146) metropolitan
American Institute of Architects, St. Louis Chapter
St. Louis, Missouri 63102
3. St. Louis Top 10 Building Designs
published: July 3 & 4, 1978
St. Louis Globe Democrat
St. Louis, Missouri

7. Description

Condition

☒ excellent
☐ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Shanley Building is located at 7800 Maryland Avenue, the southwest corner of Bemiston, in Clayton, Missouri. The block is largely occupied by two and three-story retail and office structures but is part of a larger commercial district that is rapidly being rebuilt with high-rise offices. The building presents one story to Maryland Avenue, but a drop of ten feet along Bemiston exposes a two-story elevation to the south. This somewhat taller section houses a large waiting room on the main floor and a recreation room below. A terrace supported by projecting east and west walls shelters the ground-floor entrance. In plan, the building forms an inverted T, the two-story portion forming the broad base while five smaller rooms for consulting, operating and laboratory work range to the north.

The Shanley Building is typical of the International Style in its asymmetrical balance of contrastingly proportioned volumes.¹ Also characteristic are its concrete construction, smooth white stucco walls, flat roof (actually slightly canted but concealed by a low parapet), continuous bands of windows, and extensive use of glass brick. In the waiting room the curving reception desk responds to the adjacent curve of the stairway and both appear as elements of contrast to the prevailing rectilinearity.

The main entrance to Maryland Avenue opens at the end of a long walkway paralleling the northwest side of the building. A courtyard is created by a low stucco slab fence which is supported above ground by braces on the inside.² The wall flanking the walk is blank except for three vents and a narrow ribbon window of glass bricks running its length at clerestory level. To the right of the door is a glass brick sidelight. On the Bemiston side, five fixed picture windows alternate with five double-hung windows in a continuous band of fenestration. Above them a broadly overhanging roof ends in an aluminum gutter. These and similar windows throughout the building are double-glazed. The airspace in the fixed windows was dehumidified with calcium chloride in a metal box located under the windows, a feature especially designed for this building.³ Two of these wide fixed windows at the east end of the waiting room are flanked by double-hung ones, and two more pairs of fixed windows light the south wall of the recreation room. Broad glass brick windows mark the east wall of the recreation room and the west wall of the waiting room. The south wall of the waiting room is almost entirely glass, five panels across and two up. The west portion of this elevation has a lower roofline, corresponding to that of the north wing, and the terrace of this portion has a flat roof supported by one outside post.

Nearly all the interior fittings are original, and most of them were designed by the architect.⁴ In the waiting room these include fireplace grate and accessories, the large map mural, the floor, table, and ceiling lights, armchairs, wooden chairs, tables and long banquette. The upholstered pieces have been recovered but are otherwise unaltered.

The only evident change to the exterior of the building is a metal shade that has been fitted over the west window of the waiting room. Inside, a small office has been partitioned off at the west end of the recreation room. The building is now

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owned and used for its original purpose by the son of the builder. Although it remains well cared for, its future must be considered threatened by the dramatic pace of commercial redevelopment in central Clayton.

NOTES

1. Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 241-246.
2. George McCue, The Building Art in St. Louis (St. Louis: American Institute of Architects, 1981), p. 146.
3. The Architectural Record, Vol. 80 (Nov. 1936) p. 391.
4. Several items were illustrated in Architectural Review, Vol. LXXXI, No. 484 (March 1937), p. 141.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1935 **Builder/Architect** Wilkins & Philippi/Harris Armstrong

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The building for Dr. Leo Shanley in Clayton, Missouri, was the first important example of the International Style to be built in the St. Louis region. It won international recognition and established the reputation of its architect, Harris Armstrong, as a leader of the modern movement in the midwest. Recently it was cited by a poll of architects as one of "St. Louis' Top 10 Building Designs."¹ Although the building remains almost perfectly preserved and in the ownership of the builder's family, its future is uncertain due to its location in a business district that is rapidly being rebuilt with multi-story office buildings.

By 1934, when Dr. Shanley commissioned Harris Armstrong to design his office, the International Style was already becoming established in the larger cities of the country. The Museum of Modern Art's landmark 1932 exhibition organized by Henry Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson² had given its name to a way of building (and more importantly a philosophy of architecture) that had arisen in Europe in the 1920's in the work of Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, J.J.P. Oud and Le Corbusier.³ Examples of the style had appeared on the West Coast in the houses of Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra, notably the latter's Lovell "Health" House of 1928-29.⁴ In New York Raymond Hood's McGraw Hill Building was completed in 1931, while the PSFS tower by George Howe and William Lescaze opened in Philadelphia the following year.⁵ George Fred Keck had introduced the style to the midwest in 1929 with his Miralago Ballroom near Wilmette, and the model houses he built for the Chicago World's Fair of 1933-34 were widely seen.⁶ Harris Armstrong had admired Keck's House of Tomorrow at the fair and he had worked for Raymond Hood on early designs for Rockefeller Center in 1930. But until the commission from Dr. Shanley, he had found St. Louis with "its conservative, even reactionary, tendencies" unwilling to support such forward-looking design.⁷

Armstrong was born in 1899 across the river from St. Louis in Edwardsville, Illinois, the son of a tobacco salesman.⁸ He began his study of architecture in 1923, attending Washington University's night school while working as office boy and draftsman for G.F.A. Bruggeman. He later spent a year at Ohio State but gained most of his architectural education through a series of jobs for the leading "period" architects of the day in St. Louis: La Beume and Klein, Maritz & Young, and Isadore Shank.⁹

Returning from New York in late 1930, Armstrong experienced several lean years in private practice before receiving three important commissions in 1934. One was for a small clubhouse at Chrystal Lake Golf Club and another for a prominently situated filling station in the City of St. Louis. The Shell Oil Company gave him the freedom to design a striking wedge-shaped terracotta clad building with a tall mast but did little to advance his reputation; the building was published anonymously.¹⁰

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By contrast, the Shanley Building, the third of these projects, was given eleven pages in the Architectural Record of November 11, 1936. The English publication Architectural Review featured it the following March¹², and photographs were displayed that year in the U.S. Pavilion at the "Exposition Internationale des Arts et des Techniques Appliquées à la Vie Moderne" in Paris. At home the building was initially less favorably received. "A former professor of mine at Washington University delighted in telling his classes about the ridiculous building I had designed," Armstrong later recalled.¹³ The professor, who prided himself on being an expert in French culture was "somewhat chagrined" when the French government gave Mr. Armstrong a silver medal.¹⁴

That award was perhaps not as much of a triumph as it may seem. The Paris Exposition, which is remembered today for its permanent buildings, the Palais de Chaillot and the former Musée d'Art Moderne, was devoted to "modern" as opposed to merely contemporary design,¹⁵ and the American pavilion had made its architectural selections accordingly. Nineteen of the architects represented won prizes in three categories. The grand prize winner in residential architecture was Alden B. Dow of Midland, Michigan and the gold medalist was the New York and Palm Beach firm of Treanor and Fatio. George Howe won a silver medal (really the third prize) along with Armstrong, whose commercial building was apparently included in the residential category by courtesy.¹⁶

Beginning with the Shanley Building, Armstrong's designs appeared annually in the Architectural Record.¹⁷ Architectural Forum surveyed his recent work in 1945, and Pencil Points did a biographical sketch the following year.¹⁸ By then he was much more influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright, and white had been replaced in his palette by the reds and greens of brick walls and sheltering copper roofs. His association with physicians remained strong and he produced medical facilities in the suburban communities of Brentwood, Clayton, Kirkwood and Webster Groves as well as the outstanding Grant Clinic in St. Louis. For Drs. Carl F. and Gerti T. Cori, he designed one of the earliest International Style houses locally; the Coris shared the Nobel Prize for physiology in 1947. Another notable Armstrong house was built overlooking the Missouri River for Dr. Evarts Graham, whose research established the link between smoking and cancer. By the fifties Armstrong was doing some of the major projects in the St. Louis area, including the Magic Chef office building with its lobby ceiling by Isamu Noguchi, and the seven million dollar engineer campus for McDonnell-Douglas.¹⁹ He was awarded fourth prize, in the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, the only local architect to place.²⁰ Outside this area he designed the new Federal Building in Kansas City, the officer's club at Fort Benning, Georgia, and the U.S. Consulate in Basra, Iraq. While his later work seldom achieved the clarity or stylistic coherence of his earlier designs, he remained highly respected, in effect the dean of the modern movement in St. Louis. He retired in 1971 and died in 1973.²¹

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The client, Leo M. Shanley, also had a distinguished career as an orthodontist. A fellow of the American College of Dentists, he served as president of the International College of Dentists, the Missouri Dental Association, and the St. Louis Dental Society. He received a special award from Washington University's dental school as an alumnus of great distinction. He was in practice for over half a century, from 1922 until his death in 1979 at age 81.²² His son, Dr. Leo S. Shanley, also an orthodontist, continues to use the same now-historic building whose "distinctly futuristic look belies its age".²³

NOTES

1. Peter Hernon, "St. Louis' Top 10 Building Designs," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, July 3 and 4, 1978.
2. The catalogue was published as The International Style (New York: W.W. Norton, 1932, reprinted 1966).
3. Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1969), pp. 241-246.
4. The Lovell "Health" House has been recorded by the Historic American Buildings Survey and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.
5. PSFS is a National Historic Landmark.
6. Narciso G. Menocal, Keck & Keck, Architects (Madison, Wis.: Elvehjem Museum of Art, 1980); Stuart E. Cohen Chicago Architects (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1976).
7. Harris Armstrong quoted in Architectural Forum, "Recent work by Harris Armstrong", Vol. 83, No. 3 (Sept. 1945), p. 115.
8. The most detailed study of Armstrong's early career has been done by John Lindenbusch in his nomination of the Gables Tea Room, University City, Mo., to the National Register of Historic Places, March 1980. Other sources include Dickson Terry, "Looking in on Top Architect", St. Louis Post-Dispatch, June 16, 1957; Carol Rehg, "Old Man of Modern Architecture Has Young Ideas," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, June 14, 1968; St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "Harris Armstrong Dies; Noted Architect," December 16, 1973; St. Louis Globe-Democrat, "Harris Armstrong dies, local architect," December 17, 1973.
9. Houses by LaBeaume and Klein and Maritz & Young are included in the Brentmoor Park and Carrswold districts recently nominated to the National Register.

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10. The Shell station located at the northwest corner of Vandeventer and Lindell was illustrated in Architectural Forum, Vol. 66 (Feb. 1937), p. 91. It has been demolished, as has the Club building.
11. Vol. 80 (Nov. 1936), pp 390-400.
12. Vol. 81 (March 1937, pp. 134-135, 141.
13. Carol Rehg, op. cit.
14. New York Times, "France Gives Awards to U.S. Architects," September 2, 1938, p. 17.
15. Henry-Russell Hitchcock wrote one of the most interesting of the many reports on the fair in Architectural Forum, Vol. 67 (September 1937), pp. 158-174.
16. Alden Dow, a pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright, won for his own residence and office in Midland. Treanor & Fatio showed the J. Makaroff residence in Palm Beach and George Howe the Wasserman residence in Philadelphia. The Bronze Medal went to Richard Neutra of Los Angeles and William Wurster of San Francisco. The other two categories were "industrial and commercial architecture" and "sports buildings and housing developments."
17. January 1938, pp. 34-35; September 1939, pp 38-40, October 1940, pp. 54-55.
18. Architectural Forum, see note 7; Pencil Points, Vol. 27 (August 1946), p. 14.
19. George McCue, The Building Art in St. Louis: Two Centuries (St. Louis: American Institute of Architects, 1981), pp. 103, 126. The Magic Chef building has been greatly altered and the Noguchi sculpture is now in the St. Louis Art Museum.
20. Sharon Brown, "Jefferson National Expansion Memorial: The 1947-48 Competition" Gateway Heritage, Vol. 1, No. 3 (Winter 1980), pp. 40-48.
21. Armstrong's papers are now housed at the Washington University School of Architecture, where the Harris Armstrong Memorial Lecture is given each autumn.
22. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "Dr. Leo Shanley Funeral Monday", July 29, 1979.
23. Peter Hernon, op. cit.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Architectural Forum, Vol. 83, No. 3 (Sept. 1945), p. 15
2. Architectural Record, Vol. 80 (Nov. 1936), pp. 391-400.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .18 acre

Quadrangle name "Clayton, Mo."

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 15 731750 4281250
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification An L-shaped plot forming the NE part of Lot 9, Block 11, Town of Clayton, beginning at the SW corner of Maryland and Bemiston Aves., thence S along Bemiston 152 ft., thence W 75.18 ft., thence N 54 ft., thence E 34.46 ft., thence N 95.21 ft., thence E 40.72 ft. along Maryland to beginning.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state Missouri code 29 county St. Louis code 189

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title J. Esley Hamilton

organization St. Louis Co. Dept. of Parks and Rec. date November 1981

street & number 1723 Mason Road telephone (314) 822-8475

city or town St. Louis state Missouri 63131

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national X state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Director, Department of Natural Resources and date
State Historic Preservation Officer

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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3. Architectural Review, Vol. LXXI, No. 484 (March 1937), pp. 134-135, 141.
4. Hernon, Peter. "St. Louis' Top 10 Building Designs," St. Louis Globe-Democrat, July 3 & 4, 1978.
5. Lindenbusch, John. "Gables Tea Room," National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form. University City, Mo., March 1980.
6. McCue, George. The Building Art in St. Louis: Two Centuries. St. Louis: American Institute of Architects, 1967, p. 68; Third edition 1981, p. 146.
7. New York Times, "France Gives Awards to U.S. Architects," September 2, 1938, p. 17.
8. Parker, Molly. "Armstrong Display at Givens," West End World, Nov. 12, 1974.
9. Rehg, Carol. "Old Man of Modern Architecture Has Young Ideas," St. Louis Globe Democrat, June 14, 1968.
10. St. Louis Globe Democrat, "Harris Armstrong dies; local architect," Dec. 17, 1973.
11. St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "Harris Armstrong Dies; Noted Architect," Dec. 16, 1973.
12. _____, "Dr. Lee Shanley Funeral Monday," September 29, 1979.
13. Terry, Dickson. "Looking In on Top Architect," St. Louis Post Dispatch, June 16, 1957.

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2. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey
and State Contact Person
Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Program
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City
June 1982
314/751-4096
Missouri 65102

1 030 000
FEET

U.S.G.S. 7.5'
"Clayton, Mo.-Ill."
Scale: 1:24,000

Quadrangle
(1954-rev.
1974)

SHANLEY BUILDING
7800 Maryland Ave.
Clayton, Missouri

UTM REFERENCES:
A. 15/731750/4281250

38°37'30"
90°22'30"

(KIRKWOOD)
7961 III SW

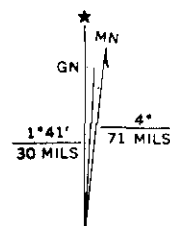
Mapped by the Geological Survey
Revised by the Army Map Service
Published for civil use by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography from planetable surveys by the Geological Survey 1933
Planimetric detail revised from aerial photographs taken 1952
Field check 1953-1954

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Missouri coordinate system, east zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 15,
shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



UTM GRID AND 1974 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

FC

SHANLEY BUILDING
7800 Maryland Ave.
Clayton, MO

1 of 6

Photographer: Esley Hamilton, 10/81
Neg.Loc.: St. Louis Co. Parks & Rec. Dept.
1723 Mason Road
St. Louis MO 63131
View of north and west facades.



SHANLEY BUILDING
7800 Maryland Ave.
Clayton, MO

Photographer: Esley Hamilton, 3/80
Neg.Loc.: St. Louis Co. Parks & REC. Dept.

1723 Mason Road
St. Louis MO 63131
View of east and south facades.



SHANLEY BUILDING
7800 Maryland Ave.
Clayton, MO

3 of 6

Photographer: Esley Hamilton, 11/81
Neg. Loc.: St. Louis Co. Parks & Rec. Dept.
1723 Mason Road

St. Louis MO 63131

View of Waiting room looking east. Note
ceiling panel and wall mural.



SHANLEY BUILDING

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7800 Maryland Ave.

Clayton, MO

Photographer: Esley Hamilton, 11/81

Neg.Loc.: St. Louis Co. Parks & Rec. Dept.

1723 Mason Road

St. Louis Mo 63131

Detail of northeast corner of waiting room.

Light and fireplace fixtures are original.



SHANLEY BUILDING
7800 Maryland Ave.
Clayton, MO

5 of 6

Photographer: Esley Hamilton, 11/81
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1723 Mason Road

St. Louis MO 63131

Detail of northwest corner of waiting room.
Furniture, desk and lights are original.



SHANLEY BUILDING
7800 Maryland Ave.
Clayton, MO

Photographer: Esley Hamilton, 11/81
Neg.Loc.: St. Louis Co. Parks & Rec. Dept.
1723 Mason Road

St. Louis MO 63131
Detail of southwest corner of waiting room.
Furniture, desk and lights are original.

